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ABSTRACT

By Florida law, coordinating councils in all 28 community college districts have been established to coordinate and articulate vocational-technical education, adult general education, and community instructional service programs between the community colleges and secondary schools. These councils are charged with reviewing existing programs and with making recommendations to encourage the development of needed offerings and/or the alteration of duplicated offerings. In order to determine which councils were most effective in carrying out their mandated functions, council meeting minutes were studied, a questionnaire was mailed to all 190 members of the 20 active coordinating councils in 1974-75 (the 144 responses represent a 76 percent response rate), and personal interviews were conducted with the chairmen of community college boards of trustees and school boards. Specifically investigated were: (1) the nature of council goals; (2) the operating procedures; and (3) the behavior and qualifications of council members. In spite of a general agreement as to the potential impact of the councils, most of the existing councils were considered ineffective in carrying out their mandated functions. In order to improve council effectiveness, a list of guidelines is compiled in this document for adopting and implementing effective council procedures and practices. (NHM)

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by
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and
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INTRODUCTION

In a time of limited resources the possibility of duplicating educational effort becomes of great importance to Boards of Education, Boards of Trustees, as well as to those responsible for administering educational programs. For many reasons which are familiar to numbers of Governing Boards there has been evidence of such programmatic duplication particularly noted in the areas of vocational, technical, and adult education. This has happened because in most states and localities the legal responsibility for these programs has been placed in the local school districts, in community college districts, in university boards, and upon occasion in state agencies all at the same time. There has been little guidance provided in the law which would clarify the extent of the responsibility of any of these boards who are required by law to provide vocational, technical, and adult educational opportunities. Even when such guidance is provided it is of necessity both vague and difficult to interpret. Most states have tended to ignore this problem, hoping it would go away. A few states have attempted to reach workable solutions.

This report describes the procedures used in one state and concludes with some tentative Guidelines for implementing such procedures which could be applied in other situations. These procedures have been tested in terms of "small group and committee" theory in hopes that such theory would yield some hints for making the procedures viable and workable.

The focus of this report is upon the State of Florida where community colleges and secondary schools are used as the delivery systems for providing the needed vocational-technical education, adult general education and community instructional services programs in its 28 community college districts. The legal responsibilities specify that the quality of these programs should be adequate as well as specific enough to meet the needs of all the residents in each community.

While both the community college and secondary schools share the responsibility of providing these services, the state legislature has decreed that there be no unwarranted duplication of programs. The intent of this edict was to encourage inter-institutional planning in deciding which delivery system can best provide a program or phase(s) of a program identified as needed in the community.

The process of coordinating and articulating these programs among and between community colleges and secondary schools requires extensive cooperative planning and coordination at the local level as well as at the state level. To facilitate this planning the State Board of Education in attempting to follow the intent of the Florida Legislature in Section 6A-6.67 and subsequently amended in Section 6A-8.57 established a regulation that each community college district establish a coordinating council for vocational education, adult general education and community instructional services programs. The SBE regulation specifies that the membership of these councils be composed of: the superintendent and director(s) of vocational education and adult general

education in each community college district and the president and dean(s) or director(s) of vocational education and community instructional services of the community college.

The responsibilities of the council are identified to be: reviewing the total vocational education, adult general education and community instructional services programs offered in the district and making recommendations as are necessary to encourage the development of needed offerings or changes in existing offerings in order to avoid unwarranted duplication.

Research has shown that the effectiveness of small groups require more than a legal decree to assure that the coordinating councils will function properly. Experimental research conducted during the past half century has developed a conceptual scheme and basic theoretical formulation which provide a systematic framework for the analysis of group behavior. The results of these studies indicate that small group behavior cannot be accounted for in terms of the preexisting behavior of individual members. Group behavior is explained more adequately in terms of the dynamic relations which individuals have with other individuals. Theories of group behavior relate concepts to one another and create a framework for the possible improvement of small group (committee) productivity.

This study focused upon these 28 coordinating councils to determine which of them were rated most effective in regard to selected committee processes related to (a) nature of coordinating

council goals, (b) operating procedures of coordinating council members, and (c) behavior and qualifications of the coordinating council members, and (d) behavior and qualifications of the coordinating council chairperson as perceived by its members representing the postsecondary schools and those representing the secondary schools. The study also examined those among the councils which were considered to be least effective in regards to the same processes.

Attention was also given to determining to what extent there are commonalities and/or differences between the councils rated most effective and those rated least effective in regards to selected committee processes related to (a) nature of coordinating council goals, (b) operating procedures of coordinating councils, (c) behavior and qualifications of coordinating council members, and (d) behavior and qualifications of the coordinating council chairperson as perceived by its members representing the colleges and those representing the secondary schools.

Finally consideration was given to identifying to what extent the theoretical small group processes are related to (a) nature of committee goals, (b) operating procedures of committees, (c) behavior and qualifications of committee members, and (d) behavior and qualifications of committee chairpersons applicable to coordinating councils.

The committee is a common vehicle used by many institutions in society to allow greater participation in internal governance as well as for coordinating activities between institutions. As governmental, industrial, religious and educational institutions have expanded and

become more complex, committees have been set up in greater numbers to cope with problems where broad representative opinions are needed. Throughout the use of committees, authors have advocated certain procedures for initiating and operating committees in order to increase their effectiveness. There is little evidence to indicate that their claims are always substantiated by research study.

In this study the validity of the claims made by committee experts that certain theoretical committee processes affect committee effectiveness was tested.

There is widespread feeling among community college and secondary school administrators that these councils do permit greater participation in coordinating programs between the community college board of trustees and the board of public instructions. On the other hand, there is considerable discontent with the lack of efficiency with which they operate. It appeared that one of the better ways of examing these councils was to examine the perceptions held by coordinating council members.

Procedures.

In order to determine the most effective and least effective coordinating councils, an examination of each council meeting's minutes from 1972 to 1974 was conducted. It should be noted that 8 councils were reported as "inactive"during 1974 leaving 20 districts for study.

The minutes of each active council were analyzed to determine the extent that each council is accomplishing its mandated functions as specified in the Florida State Board of Education Regulations, Section 6A-8.57.

Section 6A-8.57 of the Florida State Board of Education Regulations requires that a coordinating council be established in each community college district and that it review and make recommendations to the respective school board and to the community college board of trustees and where appropriate, a division director of the department of education for: (1) adjustments of existing programs, activities and services, (2) agreements between boards to provide coordinated and articulated vocational education, adult general education and community instructional services, (3) long-range (6 years) objectives for the school district and the community college district, (4) the support of proposed programs, and (5) other aspects of the program(s), and to make such recommendations as are necessary to provide an efficient, well-coordinated and comprehensive vocational education, adult general education, and community instructional services programs.

In this analysis each council could have received a maximum of 10 points; one for reviewing and one point for making recommendations to the school board and board of trustees for each of the five mandated functions listed above. Once a council had recorded in its minutes that it had reviewed or recommended to the boards a mandated function, it received one point. No attempt was made to identify the frequency that each council had reviewed or recommended action to the boards for a particular function.

The aggregate points received by each coordinating council determined its position in a one to 20 ranking. The median rating was used to distinguish the most effective council from the least effective councils. Those councils above the median were rated as the most effective and those below the median were rated as the least effective.

The instrument (Appendix A) used to collect the data for this study was devised to utilize the criteria which have been advocated by experts as necessary or important to initiate and/or operate an effective committee.

The first draft of the instrument with accompanying instructions was delivered by the researcher to a panel of experts. This panel of experts was requested to evaluate the draft in terms of whether each criterion was absolutely necessary, appropriate, and stated clearly. In addition, the panel of experts was asked to make recommendations on the overall format of the instrument and to add criteria which in their opinion would assist in accomplishing the objectives of the study.

On the bases of the reactions from the panel of experts, a final draft of the instrument was devised. All revisions were based on remarks which were consistently directed at specific criteria and those which were perceived to be beneficial in achieving the objectives of the study.

A questionnaire was mailed to each member and chairperson of the 20 coordinating councils that were active for the academic year of 1974 to 1975. A total of 144 questionnaires were returned out of a 190 mailed for a return rate of 76%.

Data were also collected from the chairmen of the community college board of trustees and the schools boards. These data were collected via a structured personal interview.

The first step to be completed in analyzing the data was to determine if there was homogeneity among the responses of the most effective and the least effective council members representing the post secondary schools and those representing the secondary schools. For those items where there were no significant differences between the responses between the post-secondary and secondary school members, the two were combined so that an analysis could be made between the most effective and least effective councils.

A Chi-Square was used to test if there was a significant difference in responses between the most effective and least effective groups. The .05 level of significance was used for these analyses.

After these activities were completed further validation of the conclusions were tested through personal interviews with representatives of six colleges and schools in their areas. These interviews were divided between most effective and least effective committees and provide further basis for the guidelines herein presented.

PART II

Related Research

The literature reviewed for this study showed a high degree of congruence among writers about a variety of aspects related to initiating and operating effective committees. The content of these materials ranged from a description of a particular committee system to phenomena which are of theoretic interest in small group analysis.

Nature of Committees

A survey of executive attitudes on the subject of committees might well lead to at least two frustrating aspects of committees: (1) the categorization of committees, and (2) the notion that committees must be the worst and at the same time, the best means to achieve a goal. (Albers, 1969, p. 212).

A perusal of the literature on committees will cause one to realize that efforts to place committees into mutually exclusive categories are difficult if not impossible. Such levels as "task," "decision-making," "general," "restricted," "advisory," "fact-finding," and "policy-making" lack a common basis that would enable one to say that they are mutually exclusive. A particular committee may be identified by one of the categories, but may be assigned responsiblities involving several of these activities.

The pros and cons about committee effectiveness can be equally perplexing. The range of reactions from positive to negative can be attributed partially to the fact that committees are used in a variety of ways. Shaw has remarked that committees should be judged according

to the purpose for which they are developed and their appropriateness for the achievement of that purpose (1960, p. 11).

Decker and Fletcher believed it to be time for educators to consider the adoption of committees, as used in business, with a view of adopting some of those practices appropriate to the administration of higher education. More specifically, they believed that committees should be established to generate, exchange, and coordinate ideas and advise the administrator (1973, p. 226).

Honer write that committees are necessary in education not only because they provide an arena in which communication takes place; but in addition, they provide a place where sound policies are hammered out and where creative contributions are presented and tested (1966, p.30). Recognizing that committees are no panacea, Holden, Fisk and Smith pointed out that "despite their shortcomings, committees are an important device of administration. They are appropriate at every level of the management scale" (1951, p. 59). Generally, the authors' appraisals of committees were positive, but they agreed also that they could be detrimental to an organization if used improperly.

Establishing Effective Committees

The literature is replete with notions of how to initiate and operate effective committees. The structure and operation of several committee organizations have been studied through inferences from small-group research. The specific characteristics identified in this section relates to needs for goals, committee size, membership, and the role of chairpersons.

Need for Committee Goals. It is axiomatic for effective committees to have clearly defined goals. Decker and Fletcher wrote, "basic to the effective use of a committee is specification of its role" (1973, p. 226), while Van Winkle remarked, "a statement of purpose and the nature of limitation placed on the group should be carefully written in advance" (1967, p. 28). Doughman goes a step further by stating that committees "should have clearly stated goals that have been derived from analyses of the problem-situation and which are fully understood and accepted by individual members (1965, p. 287).

With respect to goals, resporsibility and authority, Holden et al. concluded that committees warrant the same treatment as any other department or position. In summary, writers have suggested that goals of each committee should be specified in order that its purpose and proper use will be understood by committee members and the rest of the organization.

Committee Size. From a theoretical point of view, size and its interrelations have patent relevance in small-group analysis. A review of past studies revealed that existing work relating to committee size has centered upon two general areas: the efficiency of groups of various sizes and the process characterizing small groups of various sizes.

Golembiewski suggested that the interaction of size and group processes can be classified as: (1) effects which vary directly with group size, (2) effects which are uniquely associated with "groups" of a given size, and (3) effects which are associated with the ways in which a group can be divided into subgroups (1962, p. 145).

According to previous studies, a consensus on a specific committee size is lacking. As an indication of the lack of agreement, Fergason suggests a group size should range from three to six members (1959, p. 31). Cone and Peyton recommended eight as an optimum number, with 12 as a maximum (1959, p. 30). Berelson and Steiner stressed that it is impossible to specify a strict upper limit on the size of the informal group except for the limitation imposed by the requirement that members be able to engage in direct personal relations at one time--which means, roughly, an upper limit of around 15 to 20 (1964, p. 325).

Berelson and Steiner also contend that committee size affects the interaction within the group. They stated that the larger the group:

> from two or three up to 15 or 20, then the greater the demands on the leader, the more he is differentiated from the membership at large; the greater the group's tolerance of direction by the leader and the more centralized the proceedings; the more the active members dominate his interaction within the group; the more the ordinary members inhibit their participation . . . the less intimate the group atmosphere, the more anonymous the action, and generally, the less satisfied the member as a whole. (1964, p. 359).

Given a meeting lasting a fixed length of time, the opportunity for each individual to communicate is reduced and the type of communication becomes differential among group members. Bales, Strodtbeck and Roseborough reported that in groups from three to eight members the proportion of infrequent contributors increases at a greater rate than that theoretically predicted from decreased opportunity to communicate (1951, pp. 461-468). A similar result was

reported in 1952 when Stephen and Mishler concluded that there was a positive correlation between group size and participation initiated by the most active and next most active person. (pp. 598-608).

In summary, it would appear that the ideal size of a committee depends on its function. In addition the extent to which a number is "ideal" may be measured in terms of the effects that size has on socioemotional relations among group members, and thus the extent to which the group operate as an integrated whole rather than as fragmented subunits.

Committee Membership. Probably the first characteristic of a good committee is that it members have open minds and are willing to be convinced by facts. It is equally important that members be generally committed to the same overall objective.

Filley and House go one step further in stating that, "committee members should be functionally and personally qualified for the task" (1969, p. 327). Sprigel and Bailey are of the opinion that committee members should fully realize that their purpose is not to endorse any individual opinion, but to develop the best collective judgement of the group as a whole (1959, p. 56).

The underlying assumptions related to committee membership were summarized by Munford and Duryea. These writers suggested that if a committee is to operate as a unit, it is important that its members have a point of view which transcends personal ambition. They must accept the role of working as a part of a unit. Neither dominating,

nor being dominated by the other members; they must have the ability to work together not in a fixed pattern, but dynamically as a growing and developing social organism (1951, p. 411).

The Chairperson. Literature on committees is replete with general as well as specific recommendations of qualities most desirable in a chairperson. According to some writers, if the committee is to be successful, it must have a chairperson who understands group processes. He must know the objectives of the committee and understand the problem at hand. Koontz and O'Donnel have remarked that not only can the chairperson eliminate waste and drawbacks of the committee but can also set the tone of the meetings (1972, pp. 393-394).

A research study conducted at the University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research concluded from its data that the best committee results are achieved when a forceful, directive chairman leads the group. (Make Committee Work Effective, 1958, p. 64). High procedural control, however, need not be synonymous with autocracy.

In summary, all members contribute to the maintenance and accomplishments of the group's tasks, however, the chairperson of any committee occupies a most strategic position. He should be able to vary decision strategies according to the nature of the task and the feeling of group members. As perceived on an autocratic-democratic continuum, leadership style should be appropriate to the nature of the task as well as the nature of the membership of the group.

PART III

Some Conclusions

The rigorous development of a study of this nature involves a twofold challenge. The first challenge is the reduction of the various processes to a manageable number of variables which are likely to be products of prior studies. The second challenge is the isolation of a set of variables which are functionally meaningful and nonoverlapping as well as numerically manageable.

Most of the variables utilized in this study were based on findings resulting from rigid scientific investigations. The remaining variables, whose theoretical foundation is rather primitive, have been selected primarily on the basis of committee processes advocated by authors of small-group theory. The one open-ended statement on the questionnaire provided an opportunity for the respondents to react, without restriction, to practices and ideas that they believe contribute to the effective functioning of coordinating councils.

The 40 variables may be examined in the Appendix. These are intended to be representative of the total committee work as a coordinating council.

The variables used in this study are divided into four categories or groups of related questions. There are: Goals of Committees, Operating Procedures of Committees, Behavior and Qualifications of Committee members, and Behavior and Qualifications of the Chairperson.

A statistical analysis of the data from the most effective councils revealed that the college and secondary school administrators rated the use of committee processes related to the identified areas with a high degree of uniformity. Significant differences between the perceptions

of the college and secondary school administrators were computed for only two of the 40 variables. One of these variables related to the nature of coordinating council goals and the other related to operating procedures of coordinating councils.

The variable which related to the nature of council goals dealt with the congruence of the goals adopted by the council and those stipulated in Section 6A.8.57 of the State Board of Education Regulations. The college administrators tended to rate the congruence of the goals adopted by the council and those stipulated in the state regulations higher than the secondary school administrators. The following are response ratios for the college and secondary school administrators: Seldom, 33:67; Usually, 41:59; and Always, 72:28.

The second variable that the responses of the college and secondary school administrators were significantly different related to the degree that the council's meetings are conducted according to a set of standard rules and regulations, (e.g. Robert Rules of Order). For this particular variable, the college administrators tended to indicate that council meetings are conducted according to a set of standard rules and regulations, whereas the secondary school administrators felt that the meetings are not. The following response ratios for the college and secondary school administrators for this variable are: Yes, 68:32 and No, 46:54.

Based on these data, it was concluded that the college and secondary school administrators of the most effective councils perceive the extent that their councils use committee processes related to (a) nature of coordinating council goals, (b) operating procedures of coordinating councils, (c) behavior and qualifications of coordinating council

members, and (d) behavior and qualifications of the coordinating council chairperson with a high degree of consistency.

In regard to the ineffective councils, the data collected revealed that the college and secondary school administrators of the least effective councils rated the use of committee processes related to the areas identified with a high degree of uniformity. Significant differences between the college and secondary school administrators were computed for only three variables in the least effective group. These variables related to operating procedures of councils and behavior and qualifications of council members.

The first of these relates to the act of coordinating councils making decisions only after issues are studied and understood by all members. Overall, the college administrators felt that the council makes decisions only when all members have studied and understand all the issues, whereas the secondary school administrators felt that the council "usually" makes decisions when members have not studied the issues related to the problem.

The second variable, that there were significant differences among the responses of the least effective councils, relates to the degree that council meetings are conducted according to a set of standard rules and regulations. The responses were identical in the "yes" category, very similar in the "no" category; however, only five of the college administrators did not respond, whereas 15 of the secondary administrators did not respond to this variable.

The degree that the coordinating council members are cooperative in achieving the goals of the council is the third variable in which the responses among the least effective councils were significantly different. Responses to this variable reveal that the college administrators felt council members are seldom cooperative in meeting the goals of the council, whereas the secondary administrators felt that the council members are never cooperative in meeting the goals of the council.

Since only three out of the 40 variables produced a significant difference between the responses of the college and secondary school administrators, it was concluded that the least effective council members perceived the extent that their councils used the committee processes stated above with a high degree of consistency. The findings related to the commonalities and differences of the two classifications show that the 40 variables that were analyzed to determine commonalities and/or differences between the most effective and least effective councils were equally divided between the two groups. With respect to the nature of council goals, there were significant differences between the extent that the most and least effective councils used two of the three variables in this committee process area. As for operating procedures of councils, there were no significant differences for seven and a significant difference for eight variables in this committee process area. After analyzing the variables related to the behavior and qualifications of committee members, one notes that there were no significant differences for three of the selected variables, while there were significant differences for two of them. With respect to the behavior and qualifications

of the chairperson, there were no significant differences which would identify the extent to which the most and least effective councils used six of the selected variables. The same is true for the significant differences in the use of five of the variables in the committee process area.

The findings related to this question are also divided into two sections: (1) those variables whose homogeneity of response between the two groups was significant below the .05 level, and (2) those variables whose homogeneity of response between the two groups was above the .05 level.

Findings Which Support Theory

In the area pertaining to "goals of coordinating councils," two variables supported the theoretic assumptions expressed in the literature. These variables related to: (1) clarity of the goals of the council, and (2) the acceptance of goals by council members. Each of these variables showed a significant association between the effectiveness of the council and the responses to the variable. An analysis of the data reveals that members of the least effective councils do not perceive the goals of their councils to be stated as clearly as the members of the most effective councils. These data support the theory that basic to the effective use of a committee is the specification of its role.

The responses related to the acceptance of goals also appeared to vary with the effectiveness of the council. The respondents of the most effective councils tended to suggest that council members accepted the goals of the council to a greater degree than did the respondents of the least effective councils.

Eight committee processes pertaining to "operating procedures" of councils were associated with the effectiveness of the council. Four of these variables related to (1) opportunity for members to make input into the agenda, (2) the distribution of an advanced agenda, (3) a specified time for council meetings, and (4) regular scheduled meetings. For the variable relating to members having an opportunity to assist in initiating the agenda, it was revealed that members of the most effective councils were given the opportunity to raise any issue they saw fit either before or during meetings. The members of the least effective councils did not enjoy this opportunity to the same degree as did those in the most effective councils.

The theory was expressed in the literature that the agenda should be distributed to committee members at least one day in advance of the meeting. The data collected in this study revealed that the most effective councils tended to utilize this committee process to a greater degree than did the least effective councils. With respect to establishing a specified time and identifying a regular schedule for meetings, the data of this study revealed that there was a relationship between the responses to the item and the effectiveness of the council.

Four other variables in this section were positively associated with the effective councils. They were, (1) use of subcommittees, (2) adequate follow-up, (3) the degree that councils undertake responsibilities that could be better performed by an individual and (4) the frequency of meetings. In support of the theory expressed in the literature, these data purport that councils might improve their effectiveness

by creating subcommittees and doing adequate follow-up. Although the responses were significantly different between the most effective and least effective councils, it should be emphasized that responses relating to follow-up indicated that the most effective and the least effective councils made very little formal effort to determine what action had been taken on their recommendations.

The relationship between the degree that coordinating councils undertake responsibilities that could be better performed by an individual and the frequency of meetings were also strongly associated with the effectiveness of the councils. With respect to the former, two points of view were advocated by committee experts. Some suggest that an administrator may appoint a committee in spite of the fact that its task could better be performed by an individual, whereas others suggest that duties assigned to a committee that could be better performed by an individual would have a dysfunctioning effect on that committee's effectiveness. The most effective council members tended to indicate that their councils undertake responsibilities that could better be performed by an individual to a lesser degree than the least effective council members. As for frequency of meetings, the most effective council members tended to indicate that the frequency of their meetings was "about right" while the least effective council members felt that their councils did not meet enough.

Only two variables on the "behavior and qualifications of committee members" were associated with the effectiveness of the councils. They were: (1) expertise of members, and (2) the spread of activities and/or

responsibilities among all members. The findings of this study strongly support the theory that the effectiveness of the councils would affect the members responses to these variables.

As per the committee processes related to the "behavior and qualifications of the chairperson," five variables were associated with the effectiveness of the councils. The first of these related to the procedures for electing the chairperson. The general indication was that the chairperson is elected by council members; however, among the least effective councils, members tended to check the "other" category on the continuum. With respect to the term of office for the chairperson, council members tended to check the "1 year" category; however, an examination of the responses among the least effective councils revealed that 18 of the 61 administrators checked the "other" category.

The most effective council members tended to indicate that their chairperson was forceful and directive to a greater extent than did the members of the least effective councils. This finding corroborates the findings of a research study conducted at the University of Michigan (Make Committee Work Effective, 1958, pp. 62; 64; 67).

Two other variables, the degree that the chairperson summarized the actions of the group, and the rewards for serving on the council, were also associated with the most effective councils. The most effective council members tended to indicate that the chairperson from time to time in the course of the discussions summarized to help focus the discussion. The least effective council members did not rate their chairperson as high on this process as did the members of the most

effective council. As to the degree that council members are rewarded for serving on the councils, the most effective council members felt that it is "Usually" intrinsically or extrinsically rewarding to serve on the council, while the least effective coordinating council members indicated that it is "Seldom" rewarding to serve on the council.

Findings Which Do Not Support Theory

When the relationships between various theoretical processes and the council's rating of effectiveness were explored, a number of committee processes advocated by committee experts were not supported in this investigation.

The first committee process advocated in the literature that was not supported by the data of this study was related to committee size. In the literature advocates recommend that the best committee results are achieved when the committee size is small; however, there was no evidence in this study to suggest that council size was associated with effectiveness.

Committee Procedures

Seven of the variables that were not associated with effective councils were related to "operating procedures of committees."

1. The use of an agenda for council meetings: the data collected in this study revealed no significant difference in the responses to this variable between the most effective and least effective councils. Both types almost always used this committee process.

2. Distribution of minutes to members: the literature review revealed a lack of consensus as to the importance of this committee process. Some experts consider it to be important to enhance committee effectiveness, while others feel its use may or may not influence the committee's effectiveness. The data of this study revealed that both the most and least effective councils made extensive use of this process.

3. Formulation of plan(s) to attack problems: the implication was made in the literature that a lack of planning contributes to a dysfunctioning committee. The assumption was made that the most effective councils might formulate plan(s) to attack problems to a greater degree than the least effective councils. The data collected did not support this assumption.

4. The atmosphere of council meetings: the notion was expressed in the literature that the degree of cohesiveness in a group can be affected by the choice of place, time and duration of meetings. With this in mind, it was theorized that the atmosphere in which meetings are held might affect the effectiveness of the council. The data collected revealed that there were no significant differences in the responses between the most and least effective councils.

5. The evaluation of councils: the intent of this variable was to determine the degree that the coordinating councils are evaluated in terms of their goals. An examination of these data reveal that there was no significant difference in the responses between the most and least effective council members.

6. The degree that the effectiveness of the council is diminished because its goals are duplicated by other committees: it was speculated that duplication of responsibilities between committees would tend to cause them to be dysfunctioning. A majority of the members from the most effective and least effective councils indicated that their council's effectiveness is not diminished because its goals are duplicated by another committee. The "no" response could have two possible implications: (1) either the goals of the coordinating councils are not duplicated by another committee, or (2) the goals of the coordinating council are duplicated by other committees, but do not diminish the council's effectiveness.

7. The designation of a secretary or some other individual to whom questions or comments can be referred to at all times: it was assumed that there would be a difference in the responses between the most effective and least effective councils for this variable. The data collected did not support this assumption.

Members Qualifications

The following variables were not supported in the area pertaining to the "behavior and qualifications" of coordinating council members:

1. Coordinating councils include members in addition to those stipulated in the State Board of Education Regulations: to maximize their coordinating efforts, it was speculated that the most effective councils seek out additional individuals to make them members of their council to a greater degree than the least effective councils. An examination of the data revealed no significant differences in the responses

between the most and least effective councils. Both councils tended to seek out additional members.

2. The selection process of members to serve on the coordinating council: the data in this study revealed that there was almost no difference in the responses to this variable. Almost all members are selected because of their position in their respective institutions.

3. The attendance of meeting by council members: the theory was expressed in the literature that regular attendance increases committee effectiveness, therefore, it was speculated that the attendance rate of the most and least effective council members would differ. This assumption was not supported in this investigation. Both council members checked that members "usually" attended meetings regularly.

Chairperson's

As per the section related to the "behavior and qualifications of the chairperson," six variables were not supported by this investigation;

1. The chairperson has adequate clerical and staff assistance: both the most and least effective council members tended to check that the chairperson "usually" has adequate clerical and staff assistance.

2. The chairperson demonstrates an awareness of the objectives of the council: the notion was expressed in the literature that it is the chairperson's responsibility to lead the group in their efforts to achieve its goals. With this in mind, it was theorized that the most effective councils have chairpersons who are aware of and understand

the objectives of the council to a greater extent than those of the least effective councils. Based on the data collected, no association was found to support this theory.

3. The chairperson helps the group reach conclusions: the notion was expressed by committee experts that the committee chairperson should not plead, advocate, or pass judgement on an opinion being discussed. It was speculated that there would be a statistical difference in the responses to this variable between the most and least effective councils. This speculation was not confirmed. The members of both councils indicated that the chairperson "usually" helps the group reach conclusions.

4. The chairperson helps to coordinate group thinking: the data revealed that no significant differences in the response to this variable. Both chairpersons were "usually" credited with helping to coordinate group thinking.

5. The chairperson helps the council meetings start on time: it was the intent of this variable to determine if there would be a significant difference in the responses to this variable between the most and least effective councils. No significant difference was revealed from these data.

6. The chairperson deals only with relevant matters when conducting meetings: most writers of small group theory tend to agree that the chairperson as agent of the group should keep discussions irrelevant to the point to a minimum. Since it was expressed in the literature that irrelevant discussions have a dysfunctioning affect on a committee's effectiveness, it was assumed that the effectiveness of the council

would affect the member's response to this variable. An examination of the data collected did not support this assumption. Although no statistical difference was found between the councils for this variable, an examination of the comments given in the open-ended variable of the questionnaire reveals that members frequently suggested that irrelevant discussions can adversely affect the council's effectiveness.

These data revealed that committee processes related to (a) nature of coordinating council goals, (b) operating procedures of coordinating councils, (c) behavior and qualifications of coordinating council members, and (d) behavior and qualifications of the coordinating council chairperson were almost equally distributed between the most and least effective councils. Based on these data, it was concluded that some of the variables corroborated the theory expressed in the literature while the others did not.

Small Group Processes

It was assumed that the committee processes used in this study were applicable to coordinating councils. Within this context, the responses to the 40 variables in the questionnaire were analyzed and conclusions were drawn regarding the association of the variables with the effectiveness of the councils. Having anaylzed the relationships between the variables and the rated effectiveness of the council, it was revealed that 50% of the committee processes advocated by committee experts were supported by these data. Based on these findings, it was concluded that committee processes are applicable to coordinating councils.

Implications

The results of this study suggest that the adherence to committee process theory as espoused in the literature will enhance the effectiveness of the coordinating councils in discharging their mandated functions. Most of the coordinating councils are already following recommended committee process theory; however, the most effective councils tended to make greater use of the selected theories than the least effective councils.

PART IV

Implementation As Perceived By Board Chairmen

Administrators associated with the coordinating councils as well as state legislators share the belief that these councils have a tremendous potential for assisting in coordinating vocational-technical and adult education programs between the secondary schools and the community colleges. Nevertheless, based on the degree that these councils are carrying out their mandated functions, only a very few of the 28 community college districts' councils in Florida were rated as effective. In a majority of the districts, administrators meet on a very informal basis to discuss matters unrelated to those stipulated in the state board of education regulations. In the remaining districts, administrators have not been able, or have failed to see the need to establish a council. The reasons given by these districts for not establishing a council varies from district to district, but the underlying reason has been that the administrators representing the two levels of education have not been able to adopt an agreement specifying what programs will be offered by each institution.

The second phase of this study as described in this part of the report involved collecting data from the chairmen of the community College board of trustees and the school boards via a structured personal interview. Considering the fact that the coordinating councils are required to present their recommendations to these boards if action is

taken, it was felt that their chairmen would be able to contribute valuable information relative to the operation of these councils. In addition, it was felt that they might be able to make recommendations for their improvement. The ideas expressed in this chapter are the results of interviews with the chairmen of six selected school board and community college board of trustees.

The boards of trustees and the school boards are specifically identified as the agencies which must implement the decisions made by the councils. However, in several instances, the chairman interviewed had little knowledge of the operation or even the existence of these councils. Overall, these individuals felt that they did not get enough information relating to vocational education. According to most chairmen, when the president of the community college or the superintendent presented recommendations for approval, it was generally not clear whether the proposal was the result of action undertaken by the council or from recommendations from their staff.

With respect to particular problems in the program area of vocational education, the subjects interviewed generally felt that one problem has permeated the state. The core of the problem is the state's method of funding educational programs. Philosophically, the chairmen of the boards of trustees and the school boards agreed that vocational education programs should be offered at the high school as well as at the community college level. It was their opinion that there are some programs for which the community college should be the delivery system and there are those that should be provided at the high school level. They also agreed

that those programs that are begun at the high school and extended into the community college should be articulated in order to enhance the possibility that a student's skills would be continuously developed as he moves along the educational ladder.

Although these individuals realize the coordinated relationship that should exist when both levels are charged with the responsibility of providing the needed vocational education programs, it is quite evident that uncoordinated programs exist throughout the state. Vocational education, perhaps more than any other type of educational program, requires extensive coordination and cooperation within each district. However, the state's funding procedure has caused the secondary schools and community college administrators to exert a concerted effort to initiate programs to generate FTE (Full Time Equivalent) units. With both institutions competing for the same dollar this type of situation almost inevitably causes problems.

Problems of this magnitude can be rectified only through the state legislature. Though the membership of the coordinating councils include the president of the community college and the superintendent of public schools, it is not likely that either will voluntarily relinquish a program that has been developed and is generating large sums of funds. Until the state legislature can designate what programs or what phases of programs are to be provided by each institution, it is not likely that the coordinating council will be a more viable agency with respect to coordinating vocational education programs.

When the chairmen were asked about other problems affecting the coordinating councils and the area of vocational technical and adult education, comments seem to depend upon (1) whether or not the community college district is a one county or a multi-county district, or (2) whether or not the community college or a vocational school has been identified officially as the area vocational school.

It seems evident that the single county district experiences less coordinating problems than the multi-county districts. In these single county districts there is only one community college Board of Trustees and only one District Board of Education. In the multi-county districts an important consideration is the membership of the council. The membership selection process as identified by the regulation places the community college representatives in the minority. This could be one reason which causes some of the multi-county districts to refuse to use the council as an agency to decide which delivery system will be used to provide specific programs.

A second problem that exists in the large multi-county districts is the difficulty of communication. When asked what is needed to improve the council's effectiveness, board representatives frequently mentioned the need for a formal organization as well as the need to provide a staff person for communication and coordination.

Summary

The responses made by the chairmen of the board of trustees and the school boards reflect a need for a cooperative relationship between high schools and community colleges in providing educational programs.

They too seem to think that the coordinating councils can greatly assist in establishing this cooperative relationship. However, there seems to be a limit to the degree that they are willing to let such councils be effective because of vested interests. They clearly indicate that a solution to the problems found by duplication and wasted resources will not be easily discovered.

PART V

Guidelines

The need for coordinating educational programs is not new. Vocational technical education, when offered at the high school and community college level require close coordination if unwarranted duplication is to be avoided. The establishment of effective coordinating councils has the potential for providing the needed coordinating mechanism between the two institutions. This assessment concurs with the appraisal that administrators representing both institutions have given.

The functions delegated to these coordinating councils can best be achieved under conditions that will encourage its members to recommend and initiate programs based on the needs of the community. To assure the existence of a viable council certain conditions must be met. Council members themselves suggested the following values and practices:

1. "Its greatest value is that it serves as a clearing house--aids in improving communication and cooperation."

2. "Close articulation between the school system and the community college has resulted in a coordinating mechanism to enable students to advance up the career ladder."

3. "The coordinating council provides an effective forum for solving conflicts between agencies and reducing duplication of efforts and programs."

4. "The coordinating council prevents much duplication in services and programs."

5. "Coordinating councils make possible informal communication beyond the formal meetings."

6. "It given us (the school district and community college) the opportunity to minimize our biggest problem (communication)."

7. "Personnel in the school and the college has established liaison for day-to-day operational problems and concerns."

8. "Councils make possible research for new programs and evaluation of existing programs."

9. "The council can be effective by meeting issues head on. Don't sidetrack controversial issues because of personalities involved. Councils have definite responsibilities and the only way to meet these responsibilities is in a fair and decisive manner. Have something constructive to do at each meeting and each member should be notified of the agenda items in advance of each meeting. This should not preclude the council from looking into other urgent matters not on the agenda."

10. "Coordinating councils should have some designated area of interest. We have a tri-county council, but most of our junior college needs are provided by another county."

11. "Coordinating councils must have a clear-cut objective to achieve its goals."

12. "Plan continuously, follow through and make progress reports of all activities."

13. "Balanced membership from the entire district served."

14. "The middle administrators who handle the programs should be on the council."

15. "Keep current with community activities which affect vocational, technical, adult and health occupations."

16. "Membership has been expanded."

17. "Participation and attendance of all members."

18. "Involvement of business and industry leaders to complement the school board and community college members."

19. "Personal presence of community college president and county superintendent--participation by key businessmen and state university representatives."

20. "Support from the top administrators of each institution."

21. "Access to information from the entire community served as to priority needs, available services and recommendations for implementation (to avoid duplication in delivery of services). Constant evaluation and re-evaluation--fiscal awareness--cost consciousness, etc."

22. "We work at it."

23. "Have established purposes for each meeting."

24. "Team effort and special projects and studies."

25. "I believe that coordinating councils can be most effective by following the guidelines presented in the State Board Regulations (6a-8.57)."

26. "In order for the coordinating council to be effective there must exist a spirit of cooperation, an understanding of the issues and above all a commitment to the purposes and objectives of the council."

27. "Members must have a desire to contribute to the improvement of vocational education, and an interest in improving educational opportunities for all people."

28. "Willingness to compromise for the good of the greater number of people."

29. "Take active hand in making long-range and short-range plans for the district."

30. "Equal vote representation."

31. "Councils should have a formal structure, clerical staff and should meet regularly on a set day of the month in each quarter."

32. "Rotate meetings from junior college to school board."

33. "Members should have authority to implement their plans, i.e., school superintendent or junior college president."

Guidelines

Based upon the findings which support the results of previous studies developed in Part III and the practices and values listed above, the following guidelines have been developed for administrators to consider in implementing the coordinating concept for vocational, technical and/or continuing education programs.

1. Coordinating councils should be used to examine the areas where there are dual assignments of responsibilities. Such councils need the active interest and support of the boards involved. Funds should be released only to programs recommended by the council after confirmation by the responsible board.

2. The procedures recommended in small group and committee theory should be implemented to the greatest extent possible in operating these coordinating councils. Those items in this report which are characteristic of effective councils should be especially emphasized.

3. Coordinating councils do not have the authority to implement their decisions. These councils make recommendations to the county school board(s) and the community college board of trustees through the superintendent and the president. In order that the members may be informed of what action has been taken on their recommendation(s), constant follow-up should be performed by the council.

4. A concerted effort should be made to inform members of the district board of trustees and the school board members of the role of the coordinating council and its relationship to these boards.

5. To assure a more productive relationship between the boards and the coordinating councils, board members should be periodically invited to attend council meetings.

6. A full time individual is needed to carry out the day-to-day activities of the council. The employment of this individual is not intended to usurp the responsibilities of the council but the areas of assistance are so numerous that an enthusiastic and knowledgeable educator could strengthen the work of the council by providing continued attention to the details.

7. The board of trustees and the school board should request that the president and superintendent make periodic reports to them regarding the latest development in the area of vocational education that relate to the functioning of the council.

8. A test of the adequacy of a state's educational finance policy is the wholesomeness of the educational conditions in each discipline. One way to ascertain the wholesomeness of a financial

policy is to conduct periodically systematic studies to determine the extent to which the entire plan of financial support is adequate and equitable for providing the best educational system. It would be difficult if not impossible to develop an educational formula for distributing funds without some criticism, however the state legislature should devise a more nearly adequate financial policy to encourage and assure quality education in all of the state's public institutions.

9. Council members should meet with the legislators representing the community college district to discuss matters which affect the role of the council.

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APPENDIX

Dear

The Inter-Institutional Research Council is engaged in a study of all the Coordinating Councils for vocational education, adult general, and community instructional services. This letter is being sent to request information to complete this study.

The enclosed questionnaire is being sent to each person presently serving on the Coordinating Council. The data collected from this instrument will provide additional information for developing guidelines to increase the effectiveness of these councils.

We realize this comes to you at a busy time, but believe your time in completing this questionnaire will be well spent and rewarded. We also realize that a few of the members from some councils received an instrument from Dr. Danenburg at the University of South Florida with six of the items included in this instrument. We have worked together in those areas where our efforts are mutual, but feel that the Inter-Institutional Research Council needs to know much more about the committee processes practiced while your council meetings are being conducted.

Your opinions are important in making this a complete study, and we hope that you will complete the questionnaire and return it promptly and anonymousiy to Mr. Dennis P. Gallon, Research Assistant, in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Thanks for the cooperation that your council provided in completing this study. A copy of the findings will be mailed to your Coordinating Council upon the completion of our study.

Cordially yours,

James L. Wattenbarger, Director
Inter-Institutional Research
Council
Institute of Higher Education
University of Florida

GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire was designed to gain your opinion of the extent that your Coordinating Council utilizes the following committee processes while conducting its business. The committee processes specifically included in the questionnaire are those that relate to (a) Goals of committees, (b) Operating procedures of committees, (c) Behavior and qualifications of committee members, and (d) Behavior and qualifications of the chairperson.

Each of the items included in the questionnaire are those which authorities (authors who have published information on committee processes) consider important for the effective operation of a committee. Some of the items request your opinion rather than a specific answer; in this situation, please select the answer most clearly representative of your personal position. When your response to a question is "other," please write in appropriate word(s) to describe what "other" means in your particular situation.

No signature should be placed on the instrument. The answers you give will be held in complete confidence. The number on the cover is the code number assigned to your Coordinating Council.

Again may we request a prompt reply in the self-addressed, stamped envelope.

COORDINATING COUNCIL
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I am presently employed as:

_____A community college administrator

_____A secondary school administrator

_____Other

2. The approximate size of our Coordinating Council is:

_____less than 6 _____7 to 9 _____10 to 12

_____13 and over

I. Goals of Committees

3. The goals of the Coordinating Council are clearly stated.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

4. The goals of the Coordinating Council are accepted by its members.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

5. The goals adopted by the Coordinating Council are consistent with those stipulated in the State Board of Education Regulations (6A-8.57).

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

II. Operating Procedures of Committees

6. An agenda is used for Coordinating Council meetings.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

7. The members of the Coordinating Council have an opportunity to make input into the agenda development for Coordinating Council meetings.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

8. The agenda is distributed to Coordinating Council members at least one day before the council meeting is conducted.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

9. The minutes of the Coordinating Council meetings are distributed to council members.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

10. Decisions are made by the Coordinating Council only after issues are studied and understood by all council members.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

11. Coordinating Council meetings are conducted according to a set of standard rules and regulations (e.g., Robert Rules of Order).

_____Yes _____No

12. The Coordinating Council formulates a plan or plans to attack a problem.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

13. A precise time period is specified for the Coordinating Council meetings so that members can arrange their schedule.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

14. Coordinating Council meetings are scheduled to be held on the same day each week, month or quarter.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

15. Coordinating Council meetings are held in an atmosphere that is conducive to effective deliberations.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

16. The Coordinating Council uses subcommittees where appropriate.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

17. Adequate follow-up is performed to ascertain the extent that the decisions made by the Coordinating Council are implemented.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

18. The Coordinating Council undertakes responsibilities that could be performed better by an individual.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

19. The Coordinating Council evaluates itself in terms of its goals.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

20. Is the effectiveness of the Coordinating Council diminished because its goals are duplicated by other committees, boards, etc.?

_____Yes _____No _____Don't know

21. Does the Coordinating Council have a secretary or some other designated individual to whom questions or comments can be referred at all times?

_____Yes _____No _____Don't know

22. What is your opinion about the frequency of your Coordinating Council meetings?

_____Too frequent _____About right _____Not enough

III. Behavior and Qualifications of Committee Members

23. Our Coordinating Council includes members in addition to those suggested in the State Board of Education Regulations.

_____Yes _____No _____Don't know

24. The process which best describes how members are selected to serve on the Coordinating Council is:

_____Position occupied _____Popular vote _____Other

25. Coordinating Council members attend meetings regularly.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

26. Coordinating Council members are cooperative in achieving the goals of the council.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

27. Members possess the expertise necessary to carry out the functions of the Coordinating Council.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

28. Activities and/or responsibilities of the Coordinating Council are spread among its members.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

IV. Behavior and Qualifications of the Chairperson

29. The chairperson of the Coordinating Council is
_____Elected by Council members _____Other

30. The term of office for the chairperson is

_____1 year _____2 years _____Other

31. The chairperson of the Coordinating Council has adequate clerical and staff assistance.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

_____Don't know

32. The chairperson of the Coordinating Council is forceful and directive.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

33. The chairperson demonstrates an awareness of the objectives of the Coordinating Council.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

34. The chairperson helps the group reach conclusions.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

35. The chairperson helps to coordinate group thinking.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

36. The chairperson of the Coordinating Council helps the council meetings start on time.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

37. The chairperson deals with relevant matters and quickly brings the group back onto the track when irregularities threaten to sidetrack the discussion.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

38. Prior to the conclusion of the Coordinating Council meetings, the chairperson summarizes the action taken and the progress made by the group.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

39. Serving on the Coordinating Council is intrinsically and/or extrinsically rewarding.

_____Never _____Seldom _____Usually _____Always

40. Please list practices and ideas that you believe contribute to the effective functioning of Coordinating Councils.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Are most of the members of the (board of trustees/school board) aware of the existence and/or operation of the coordinating council?

2. Do you perceive the coordinating council to serve a viable function in coordinating Vocational-Technical education programs between the secondary schools and the community college?

3. What do you think are the problems in the area of Vocational-Technical education in this community college district?

4. Has the coordinating council helped to solve these problems?

5. Can you recall instances when the coordinating council made specific recommendations to the board for approval?

6. Were these recommendations approved? If not, why not?

7. Are you aware of other groups or committees in this district which have the same objectives as the coordinating council?

8. Does the board get sufficient information related to the area of Vocational-Technical education, particularly with respect to the activities of the coordinating council?

9. What can the board do to improve the effectiveness of the council in accomplishing its objectives?

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

JUL 23 1976

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES